



Wellness In Action



April: Stress Awareness Month

BAMC HEALTH PROMOTION

Are you aware of your stress?

STRESS AWARENESS

Health Promotion's Top Ten Ways To Tell If You're Stressed

1. You find yourself getting more headaches, and it's not just an excuse.
2. You can't concentrate on anything, even simple things you usually enjoy, like your favorite episode of Two and a Half Men.
3. You have more aches and pains, and it's not because you've been exercising.
4. You may have chest pain, rapid heart rate, nausea. Nope, it's not a heart attack. (Not yet)
5. Feeling irritable and you don't know why? Biting your spouse's head off for no reason?
6. Perhaps you feel alone, isolated, even in a crowd.
7. Sound familiar: "Those Krispy Kreme doughnuts really look good. I think I'll eat a couple, it's been a rough week?"
8. Procrastination is not just a long word: "I have too much to do, and I need to exercise, clean the house, organize my office.....Ah, heck, I'll start Tomorrow." (See a pattern?)
9. Insomnia and Worry: "I can't sleep, I can't shut off my brain. What if I don't get all my stuff done at work? What if I can't pay the bills?"
10. Your fingers are sore from biting your nails, you've picked up smoking or increased, you're drinking more alcohol and eating more junk.....all bad, unhealthy habits that tend to increase as stress increases.

RESOURCES:

- Work at BAMC? Check out GRIT (Staff Resiliency Programs)
- www.drweil.com
- Health and Wellness
- HOOAH 4 Health

NOW WHAT?

1. **Breathe:** Take a deep breath in (through your nose) for a count of 4, hold for a count of 7, exhale through your mouth for a count of 8. Do this 3 times a day, every day (Dr. Andrew Weil).
2. **Eat smart:** Enjoy a diet low in sodium, saturated fat and trans fat, rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, monounsaturated fat and polyunsaturated fat. Especially beneficial in improving the body's response to stress are foods that are high in Omega-3 fatty acids (walnuts, salmon, flax, sardines, soy beans, and some dark green leafy vegetables, to name a few).
3. **Exercise:** Physical activity releases endorphins, also known as the "body's own natural painkillers," which give the body an overall feeling of happiness and well-being. Exercise focuses your mind, increases energy, improves sleep, decreases depression and can lead to higher self-esteem.
4. **Meditate:** By decreasing the responses to stress (heart rate, blood pressure, muscle tension, etc.) you also decrease the effects of the stress on your body and prevent long term damage.
5. **Aromatherapy:** Scoff not! The sense of smell is closely tied to memory, so associating a scent with the practice of relaxation may help the body "remember" to relax at a stressful time instead of "ramping up". Think of it as a pleasant reminder to stay calm and breathe.
6. **Play with an animal:** Just the mere act of playing itself can illicit raucous laughter (which has been shown to improve the immune system, thin blood and improve circulation) and may help prevent some chronic illnesses. Add a pet to the mix and blood pressure, depression levels, and overall enjoyment of life may improve.

April is STD Awareness Month

April is STD Awareness Month, an annual observance to raise awareness about the impact of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) on the health of Americans and the importance of individuals discussing sexual health with their healthcare providers and, if sexually active, their partners.

For more information go to <http://www.cdcnpin.org/stdawareness/>

If you are a DOD beneficiary and have signs and symptoms of a STI or have a concern regarding possible being exposed to a Sexually Transmitted Infection see your primary care manager as soon as possible to get evaluated, tested and treated if necessary.

Tobacco Cessation Program

Health Promotions offers two classes every month on Wednesdays or Thursdays and meets once a week for 4 weeks/sessions. (No classes offered in the month of December). Classes begin on the first Wednesday or Thursday of each month. The class is open to all eligible beneficiaries on a self referral basis. Class size is limited, so enroll early. The class is offered in a group setting with a facilitator and physician oversight. The class offers behavior modification techniques, group support, nicotine replacement therapy (Nicotine patches and Nicotine gum), and tobacco cessation medication Zyban or Chantix.

To register or for more information call, Health Promotions at 210-295-2538 or 295-0049.

Dates: 1st Wednesday or Thursday

Times: 3 –4 p.m.

LOCATION: McWethy Troop Medical Clinic, 2991 Garden Avenue, Bldg 1279, Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

Group Lifestyle Balance (GLB)

GLB is a proven lifestyle intervention program. It aims to promote long-term weight loss through healthy eating and physical activity. You may be eligible to participate in this program if you are an adult (over the age of 18), a beneficiary of the military health care system and overweight (BMI greater than 25 kg/m²). If you would like to participate in the GLB program, you can enroll in a 12-week intervention program to learn healthy eating techniques and how to develop and sustain a physical activity routine.

Weeks 1-6 cover basic information such as learning about calories and fat grams; reading food labels; tracking food intake and activity; and learning how to incorporate a minimum of 30 minutes of activity into your day. Participants are advised to obtain their physician's approval prior to beginning physical activity.

Weeks 7-12 focus on behaviors, recognizing negative food cues, and initiating positive activity cues. Participants also learn to recognize ways to stay motivated.

A DVD version of the program is also available and may meet the needs of Active Duty service members who might otherwise be unable to participate due to conflicting schedules. The DVD version follows the same guidelines. However, the participant has only four face-to-face sessions with three phone calls between sessions to discuss lessons and progress.

To register or for more information, call Health Promotions at 210-295-2538 or 295-0049.